Gazette of the United States.

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THE TABLET.

No. XCV.

"There is a certain frivolous falſhood that people indulge themſelves in, which ought to be had in greater deteſtation than it commonly meets with."

IT is no ſmall inconvenience for a man to be doubted as to the truth of any thing he aſſerts. Many people acquire an habit of ſpeaking at random on indifferent matters, and without being aware of it, moſt of the information they communicate is either falſe or incorrect. The conſequence of this negligent mode of ſpeaking is, that a perſon cannot be believed when he really ſpeaks the truth.

People of a warm imagination are apt to exaggerate facts to ſuch a degree, that whenever they make an aſſertion, the hearer at once ſuppoſes great allowance is to be made, as the repreſentation is ſo far beyond the reality. There is another ſort of men, whom one ſhould believe with great reſtrictions. I mean thoſe indolent perſons, who never enquire into the circumſtances of an affair, but take up and circulate every report that comes in their way.

Whatever may be the cauſe that leads a perſon aſide from the truth, he will find a great inconvenience, in having his word ſcrupled. Nothing will ſecure to a man the reputation of veracity but a moſt rigid attention to the propriety of what he communicates. It is true that a man may be diſbelieved in all he ſays, and yet no perſon will be ſo uncivil as to charge him with uttering falſhoods. There is a genteel way of evading any direct charge in the matter. A man prone to an extravagant manner of converſation gains little belief. His acquaintance modeſtly ſay of him, that they cannot ſtrictly rely on what he aſſerts, becauſe he is accuſtomed to exaggerate. He ſuppoſes ſuch a charge conveys no reproach, and he bears it with good humour. But it would be well for him to trace the effects of ſuch a character. He ſoon forfeits the confidence of his friends; and his veracity, though, not explicitly called in queſtion, can give no currency to his words. A careleſs man likewiſe, who is too indolent to inveſtigate the truth of any matter, gets into an habit of miſtaking things, and rendering ſuſpicious whatever he alledges. Such a man, to be ſure, is not called a liar, but ſtill he never can be believed. When a perſon derives every diſadvantage that could reſult from being called a liar, it is of no great importance ſimply to avoid the character.

Few men ſufficiently eſtimate the advantages of a reputation for truth and ſincerity. It ſaves a perſon much trouble in his common intercourſe with the world. For if any one has often been known to miſrepreſent a ſtate of facts, whatever may have been his motive, he muſt, in order to gain belief, produce ſomething more valid than his own aſſertions. On the contrary, a man who has never been diſcovered in miſrepreſentations, will find no difficulty in having his word received for truth.

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

LETTER.——No. VI.

MR. FENNO,

AS the plan I am to unfold grounds itſelf, and depends entirely on the generoſity of the nation for its execution; it inſpires me with the greateſt confideuce that it will be crowned with ſucceſs: Abler heads than mine may propoſe better means for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, and the happineſs of the African free negroes, living now among us; but no one can fix his plan on a more ſolid dependence—I would propoſe:

That Congreſs be requeſted to grant to every free negro man, or family, a tract of land in the diſtrict hereafter mentioned, proportioned to what they can cultivate, but of no value in trade till occupied by him, his heirs, or thoſe to whom it was granted. That when a certain number of applications has been made for obtaining that favor, that a ſtrong ſituation be choſen, ſuch appears to be the Peninſula formed by lake Huron, lake Michigan, and lake Superior, ſouth St. Mary's ſtrait and falls, on Pouchitanui river, weſt of the ſaid lands of the Peninſula, for a colonial town. That at firſt theſe free negroes be provided with the moſt neceſſary tools, and tranſplanted there at the expence of the Commonwealth; that a governor, judges, white citizens, be appointed, and ſuch other meaſures as the wiſdom of government ſhall direct be adopted to direct the colony in its infant ſtate: That in future when any gentleman manumits his ſlave, he is to apply for the free grant of a land certificate, and pay the coſts of neceſſary tools and tranſportation to government: That government may be requeſted to lay heavy fines on the importation of ſlaves, but that it may be lawful for the freemen to ſell their ſlaves for miſbehavior, under warrant of a Judge, in the Weſt-India iſlands: That it may be lawful to have, near, or in the next pariſh church, Sunday Schools, to teach the young Negro ſlave, reading, religion, and morals.

The benefits of ſuch meaſures would be, that as reward, puniſhment, and inſtruction, go hand in hand, the ſlave will become truſty, leſs troubleſome, and more profitable to his maſter; the fear of being ſent to the Iſlands will mend his conduct; the hopes of freedom and wealth will excite him to deſerve them; the Augean ſtable will be cleaned without loſs of property; the general maſs of ſlaves will become ripe for freedom; their great number unneceſſary to agriculture; and as the reſources of the nation appear to me matchleſs by any now on the globe, it may in future be coinciding with the wiſdom of our rulers to offer a gsnerous price for the ſlave thus become fit for freedom and colonization.

But as colonization has loſt much of its credit, I will take a ſlight ſurvey of this matter. Where there is uncultivated land, colonization is prejudicial; it leſſens the progreſs of agriculture, and the increaſe of population in the mother country: In modern Europe, Portugal, Spain, and even England are the examples of this; Holland is an exception, becauſe there is almoſt no land, except in Guilderland, the reſt of the Dutch inhabit chiefly marſhes, diked and dammed; trade is the field they have to cultivate—this draws foreigners, who repleniſh what colonization exhauſts.

In Aſia it is advantageous to the Chineſe, becauſe almoſt every inch of land is cultivated, or uſefully employed, and its conſequence, population, raiſed to ſuch a pitch, that the ſouthern borders of the ſea are lined with barges, juſtly compared to permanent floating towns and villages, as the law forbids an individual born thereon to ſleep on ſhore. Colonization is alſo beneficial there, becauſe the colonies are trading ones, eſtabliſhed in the Aſiatic iſlands, and on India's continental ſhore, and becauſe the Chineſe is ſo attached to his native ſoil, that when induſtry has gained him a maintenance he returns home.

To the United States, colonization will be a triumph; it will be performed within their own territory; it will be a ſtrong frontier eſtabliſhment, commanding three lakes, beſides other advantages for time to ripen, and the government beſtowed on the African men, will attach a permanent and ineſtimable jewel to the brilliancy of the national character.

And now Sir, I thank you for the place you have given to my letters in your elegant, uſeful, and philoſophical paper: Farewell, you will hear no more from me, as in obedience to the firſt law of nature relative to man, I take the plough in hand, to ſcratch my mother's pate.

RUSTICUS.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

At the SECOND Seſſion, begun and held at the City of New-York, on *Monday* the *Fourth* of *January*, 1790.

An ACT providing for the enumeration of the Inhabitants of the United States.

BE it enacted by the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States of America in Congreſs aſſembled, That the Marſhals of the ſeveral diſtricts of the United States, ſhall be, and they are hereby authorized and required to cauſe the number of the inhabitants within their reſpective diſtricts to be taken; omitting in ſuch enumeration Indians not taxed, and diſtinguiſhing free perſons, including thoſe bound to ſervice for a term of years, from all others, diſtinguiſhing alſo the ſexes and colours of free perſons, and the free males of ſixteen years and upwards from thoſe under that age; for effecting which purpoſe, the Marſhals ſhall have power to appoint as many Aſſiſtants within their reſpective diſtricts, as to them ſhall appear neceſſary; aſſigning to each Aſſiſtant a certain diviſion of his diſtrict, which diviſion ſhall conſiſt of one or more counties, cities, towns, townſhips, hundreds or pariſhes, or of a territory plainly and diſtinctly bounded by water courſes, mountains, or public roads. The Marſhals and their Aſſiſtants ſhall reſpectively take an oath or affirmation, before ſome judge or juſtice of the peace, reſident within their reſpective diſtricts, previous to their entering on the diſcharge of the duties by this act required. The oath or affirmation of the Marſhal ſhall be, "I, A. B. Marſhal of the diſtrict of do ſolemnly ſwear (or affirm) that I will well, and truly cauſe to be made, a juſt and perfect enumeration and deſcription of all perſons reſident within my diſtrict, and return the ſame to the Preſident of the United States, agreeably to the directions of an act of Congreſs, entitled, "An act providing for the enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States," according t the beſt of my ability." The oath or affirmation of an Aſſiſtant ſhall be, "I, A. B. do ſolemnly ſwear (or affirm) that I will make a juſt and perfect enumeration and deſcription of all perſons reſident within the diviſion aſſigned to me, by the Marſhal of the diſtrict of and make due return thereof to the ſaid Marſhal, agreeably to the directions of an act of Congreſs, entitled, "An act providing for the enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States," according to the beſt of my ability. The enumeration ſhall commence on the firſt Monday in Auguſt next, and ſhall cloſe within nine calendar months thereafter: the ſeveral Aſſiſtants ſhall, within the ſaid nine months, tranſmit to the Marſhals by whom they ſhall be reſpectively appointed, accurate returns of all perſons, except Indians not taxed, within their reſpective diviſions, which returns ſhall be made in a ſchedule, diſtinguiſhing the ſeveral families by the names of their maſter, miſtreſs, ſteward, overſeer, or other principal perſon therein, in manner following, that is to ſay:

The number of perſons within my diviſion, conſiſting of appears in a ſchedule hereunto annexed, ſubſcribed by me, this day of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety

A. B. Aſſiſtant to the Marſhal of

Schedule *of the whole Number of Perſons within the Diviſion allotted to* A. B.

Names of heads of families.	Free White Males of ſixteen years, and upwards, including Heads of Families.	Free White Males under ſixteen years.	Free White Females, including Heads of Families.	All other Free Perſons.	Slaves.

And be it further enacted, That every Aſſiſtant failing to make return, or making a falſe return of the enumeration to the Marſhal, within the time by this act limited, ſhall forfeit the ſum of two hundred dollars.

And be it further enacted, that the Marſhals ſhall file the ſeveral returns aforeſaid, with the clerks of their reſpective diſtrict courts, who are hereby directed to receive and carefully preſerve the ſame: And the Marſhals reſpectively ſhall, on or before the firſt day of September, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-one, tranſmit to the Preſident of the United States, the aggregate amount of each deſcription of perſons within their reſpective diſtricts. And every Marſhal failing to file the returns of his Aſſiſtant, or any of them, with the clerks of their reſpective diſtrict courts, or failing to return the aggregate amount of each deſcription of perſons in their reſpective diſtricts, as the ſame ſhall appear from ſaid returns, to the Preſident of the United States, within the time limited by this act, ſhall, for every ſuch offence, forfeit the ſum of eight hundred dollars; all which forfeitures ſhall be recoverable in the courts of the diſtricts where the offences ſhall be committed, or in the circuit courts to be held within the ſame, by action of debt, information or indictment; the one half thereof to the uſe of the United States, and the other half to the informer; but where the proſecution ſhall be firſt inſtituted on behalf of the United States, the whole ſhall accrue to their uſe. And for the more effectual diſcovery of offences, the Judges of the ſeveral Diſtrict Courts, at their next ſeſſions, to be held after the expiration of the time allowed for making the returns of the enumeration hereby directed, to the Preſident of the United States, ſhall give this act in charge to the Grand Juries, in their reſpective courts, and ſhall cauſe the returns of the ſeveral Aſſiſtants to be laid before them, for their inſpection.

And be it further enacted, That every Aſſiſtant ſhall receive at the rate of one dollar for every one hundred and fifty perſons by him returned, where ſuch perſons reſide in the country; and where ſuch perſons reſide in a city, or town, containing more than five thouſand perſons, ſuch Aſſiſtant ſhall receive at the rate of one dollar, for every three hundred perſons; but where, from the diſperſed ſituation of the inhabitants in ſome diviſions, one dollar for every one hundred and fifty perſons ſhall be inſufficient, the Marſhals, with the approbation of the Judges of their reſpective diſtricts, may make ſuch further allowance to the Aſſiſtants in ſuch diviſions, as ſhall be deemed an adequate compenſation, provided the ſame does not exceed one dollar for every fifty perſons by them returned. The ſeveral marſhals ſhall receive as follows: the Marſhal of the diſtrict of Maine, two hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of New-Hampſhire, two hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Maſſachuſetts, three hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Connecticut, two hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of New-York, three hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of New-Jerſey, two hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Pennſylvania, three hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Delaware, one hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Maryland, three hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Virginia, five hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Kentucky, two hundred and fifty dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of North-Carolina, three hundred and fifty dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of South-Carolina, three hundred dollars; the marſhal of the diſtrict of Georgia, two hundred and fifty dollars. And to obviate all doubts which may ariſe reſpecting the perſons to be returned and the manner of making returns.

Be it enacted, that every perſon whoſe uſual place of abode ſhall be in any family on the aforeſaid 1ſt Monday in Auguſt next, ſhall be returned as of ſuch family; and the name of every perſon, who ſhall be an inhabitant of any diſtrict, but without a ſettled place of reſidence, ſhall be inſerted in the column of the aforeſaid ſchedule, which is allotted for the heads of families, in that diviſion where he or ſhe ſhall be on the ſaid 1ſt Monday in Auguſt next—and every perſon occaſionally abſent at the time of the enumeration, as belonging to that place in which he uſually reſides in the United States.

And be it further enacted, That each and every perſon more than ſixteen years of age, whether heads of families or not, belonging to any family within any diviſion of a diſtrict made or eſtabliſhed within the United States, ſhall be, and hereby is obliged to render to ſuch Aſſiſtant of the diviſion, a true account if required, to the beſt of his or her knowledge, of all and every perſon belonging to ſuch family reſpectively, according to the ſeveral deſcriptions aforeſaid, on pain of forfeiting twenty dollars, to be ſued for and recovered by ſuch Aſſiſtant, the one half for his own uſe, and the other half for the uſe of the United States.

And be it further enacted, That each Aſſiſtant ſhall, previous to making his return to the Marſhal, cauſe a correct copy, ſigned by himſelf, of the ſchedule, containing the number of inhabitants within his diviſion, to be ſet up at two of the moſt public places within the ſame, there to remain for the inſpection of all concerned; for each of which copies the ſaid Aſſiſtant ſhall be entitled to receive two dollars, provided proof of a copy of the ſchedule having been ſo ſet up and ſuffered to remain, ſhall be tranſmitted to the Marſhal, with the return of the number of perſons; and in caſe any Aſſiſtant ſhall fail to make ſuch proof to the Marſhal, he ſhall forfeit the compenſation by this act allowed him.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG,
Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.
JOHN ADAMS, *Vice-Preſident of the United States, and Preſident of the Senate.*

APPROVED, MARCH THE 1ſt, 1790.
GEORGE WASHINGTON. *Preſident of the United States.*

ANECDOTE OF GEORGE II.

ONE of the fineſt inſtances of the ſublime we ever heard of, is not as we imagine, any where recorded:----George the Second was at Drury-lane Theatre, when the Culloden diſpatches were preſented to him, from the Duke of Cumberland, his darling ſon. All was anxiety and apprehenſion. The inſtant his Majeſty had opened them, he ſtarted up while the tears ſtreamed from his eyes, and in ſome glorious ejaculation, thanked his God and announced the victory. Garrick in a moment caught the tranſporting ſound. The Orcheſtra, by his orders, ſtruck up "GOD SAVE GREAT GEORGE OUR KING!" and the whole audience in a wild enthuſiaſm, joined the chorus.

AN old ſoldier, one JEAN CHEVAUCH: otherwiſe Dupont, aged near 100 years, has enrolled himſelf in the ſecond company of the Burgeois militia at Bonetable, and has mounted guard ſeveral times ſince, in a manner which proves he has not forgot the trade he had left near 70 years. He ſerved at the defence of Liſle, in 1708, and was at the battle of Malplaquet, in 1709. He has been married twice, had 27 children, and appears to be yet very diſtant from terminating his earthly career.

BON MOT.

MAJOR Pigget, who is not only one of the livelieſt wits, but one of the pleaſanteſt Puniſters in Ireland,—being on a viſit to the late Duke of Leinſter, at Carton, paid a morning's attendence to Mr. Conolly, at Caſtletown, who was then very deep on the turf, and the morning was principally ſpent in examining and admiring the ſtud of his ſporting hoſt.

On his return to Carton, the Duke, after pleaſantly interrogating the Major on his morning's amuſement, propoſed ſhewing him *his* ſtud, which conſiſted of about 50 monſtrous bullocks, ſtall-feeding for market.

"Well Major," ſays the Duke, "which do you like better *my* ſtud or my friend Conolly's?" "Your Grace's" replied the Major "and I am ſure they will all come in for *ſteaks* and *plates* before any of his."

To be LET,

And poſſeſſion given the 1ſt of April, for one or more years, (two miles and half from this city, on the Greenwich road,)

THAT New TWO STORY HOUSE—four Rooms on a floor; with ſix fire places; a new Barn, and Well of excellent Water; a young Orchard of Fruit Trees, with 7½ acres of Land, the moſt part Meadow. For particulars enquire at No. 7, Maiden-Lane. *New-York, February 20.*

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FRIDAY, FEB. 19.

In Committee of the whole, on the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury.
Mr. MADISON'S *motion for a discrimination, still under consideration.*

MR. GERRY rose after Mr. Livermore, and observed that it was with great concern he should express his sentiments on a subject so important in its consequences: that after mature deliberation he had formed an opinion; and that should arguments hereafter preponderate against it, he should think it consistent not only with honesty, but with honor, to alter that opinion, and freely declare it.

The amendment, he said, proposed by the gentleman from Virginia, differed from the proposition before the committee in other points, besides that of discrimination; and he proposed, as an amendment to the amendment, to strike out all that related to this question, that the sense of the committe may be fairly ascertained, "Whether there shall be a discrimination between the original and assigned holders of public securities."

Mr. Gerry stated, that the foundation of the motion for a discrimination was the heavy losses sustained by our brave and veteran soldiers, in the sale of their public securities. Little or nothing, he said, had been urged in favor of meritorious officers, and of citizens who, by the loan of their property, had contributed to the support of the war, and much less of assignees; although he could see no reason why equal justice should not be done to these two classes of original creditors. To form a judgment, then said he, of the foundation of the motion for a discrimination, let us advert to the history of the army, and we shall find that their first enlistments expired at the end of 1775; that the commander in chief, not being able to re-inlist the soldiers, was reduced almost to the necessity of abandoning the extensive lines in the vicinity of Boston; that notwithstanding this, such were the prejudices in favor of short enlistments, and such the dread of a standing army, that Congress were obliged to enlist the second army for one year, and their times of service expired at or about the end of 1776. During that campaign Congress were so fully convinced of the fatal consequences of such policy, as, at all events, to determine that the next enlistment should be for the war; but they were afterwards constrained to provide the alternative, or for three years, and those who enlisted for this term left the army in 1780. We shall also find that, in 1780, the army was greatly reduced, and the states earnestly called on to recruit their respective regiments; but such were the prospects of gain, from privateering and other measures—such had been the sufferings of the army, and so little was the confidence in public faith—as to require enormous bounties in specie, and the mode of classing, for obtaining recruits: the average of bounty in many states was 250 dollars, in specie, and in Massachusetts upwards of 280. Thus, then, if we divide the army into four classes, it will appear that the soldiers of the first and second classes were discharged and fully paid, in 1775 and 1776; that the soldiers of the third class, who inlisted for the war between 1777 and 1780, served six, five, or four years, without any other prospect of reward than the stipulations of Congress; and that the fourth class, some of whom served two and an half years, others two years, and others one, were amply paid by bounties, the least of which amounted to 100 dollars a year, or 8⅓ dollars a month, in specie, exclusive of the allowance made by Congress. The third and fourth classes were, however entitled, by their contract, to 6⅔ dollars in specie, per month, or to an equivalent, exclusive of bounties, rations, and cloathing; and how has the contract been fulfilled?

He then referred to a memorial of the officers and soldiers of the army, stating their grievances to Congress, in April, 1783; and likewise a resolve of Congress of July in the same year, for liquidating the accounts of the army, and for issuing certificates which would then produce but 2s. 6d. in the pound, for the balance due to each officer and soldier.

Mr. Gerry then asked, Is this a fulfilment of the contract? Was ever such a brave army, was ever any army, so paid before? If then the contract has not been fulfilled, ought not the party, failing to do this, to indemnify the party who have sustained damages? Justice may be in favor of the fourth class; but justice, generosity, and humanity, plead loudly for the third class, the amount of whose demands will not exceed 2000000 dollars.

The question then is, Who ought, in justice, to make good these losses of the soldiery? Some gentlemen say, those who purchased their certificates: On what principle? From their having received them without an equivalent. Let us attend to the nature of the contract of the soldiers with the assignees; for it differs widely from that with Congress. Some gentlemen consider it in the nature of a specialty or bond, and have carried us to courts of law, to prove that whatever has been paid short of the nominal value of the certificates, is now due from the assignees. This mode of reasoning is inadmissible, because particular decisions of law courts cannot apply to great national questions; and the legislature is authorised to regulate such courts, and is not to be regulated by them. But if admissible, is the transfer of a soldier's certificate in the nature of an assigned specialty? For, if not, arguments on this principle will fall to the ground, and we shall be again freed from courts of law.

Mr. Gerry then shewed what a bond was, according to the law-definition of it, and that a certificate differed from it; as in the latter there was no condition of performance, or seal, and in the transfer no indorsement is necessary. The title, he said, of an assignee to a certificate was by a sale, which is "a transmutation of property from one man to another, in consideration of some value or recompence."

He further observed, that the public securities of the United States are a species of stock or property, similar to merchandize; they are sold in open market, and at the market price, which is always an equivalent: for the market price of stock, he said, was regulated by the public opinion, and depended in a great measure on the circumstances of the nation, and on events: It had always been subject to great variations, and ever would be whilst communities are subject to calamities; and this is a quality inseparable from that species of property. To illustrate his argument he stated two cases, the latter of which is as follows:—Suppose that the public debt was funded, and the stock at par; that a combination of European powers had been secretly formed to subdue us; that a fleet, with a formidable army, had suddenly appeared on our coast, and that the enemy had landed before arrangements could be made to resist them, and had over-run half the country: Would not stock, under such circumstances be reduced in value? If a stockholder should insure his property in the funds, would not the policy be as valid against such an enemy, as any other policy in time of war?

Let us suppose that this calamity had raised the premium to 80 per cent. and the stockholder had agreed to allow it, would not the insurer be justly entitled to it for taking the risk? But if the stockholder, instead of giving the premium, had made sale of his property at 80 per. cent. discount, being one fifth of its former value, would not that fifth be an equivalent and the sale valid? Where is the difference, except merely the mode of negociating, between insuring his property at 80 per cent. premium, and selling it at 80 per cent. discount? Or, where is the injustice of the measure in either case? But should the enemy be expelled, and stock again at par, can the original stockholder, in justice, demand any part of the 80 per cent. premium, or of the 80 per cent. discount, on a pretence that he has not received an equivalent? If the whole had been lost, would he have returned the 20 per cent. which he received of the insurer or purchaser?—Surely not: and it must be evident that although the nominal was the real value of stock before the appearance and after the repulse of the enemy, yet that the value was reduced by the danger of conquest, and that the market price at that period was an equivalent.

Several cases have been cited as precedents for discriminating: that which relates to the reduction of the Canada bills, mentioned by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Madison) was by his own acknowledgment not applicable. The case referred to in the act of Queen Ann, cited by the gentleman, was not analogous; for, independent of other considerations, the debt contracted by the Queen for the support of her household was unliquidated, and by a vote of the House of Commons had been disallowed: Had the debt been liquidated, and certificates of it issued, as in the case of our soldiers, there would have been no interference of parliament in the subsequent transfer of such certificates, as their whole conduct evinces.

Gentlemen, in favor of discrimination, have also mentioned the South-Sea and Mississippi schemes: The gentleman from New-Jersey (Mr. Boudinot) had clearly shewn that the conduct of parliament in the South-Sea scheme was directly against discrimination; for although they imprisoned the directors and others, and confiscated their property, yet they never interposed in the transfers of stock by other proprietors, although it was bought and sold from par to 13 or 1400 per cent.

The history of the Mississippi scheme I propose not to state fully but to mention a few particulars. In the year 1717 the government of France were deeply indebted, and had issued state bills to the amount of several hundred millions of livres, they were sold at 60 or 70 per cent. discount; and the Regent of France, desirous of appreciating them, established a commercial company with the exclusive privilege of trading to the Mississippi, to consist of such as would subscribe 60 millions payable in state bills at par; at first there were few disposed to be concerned, but at length the sum was subscribed, the stock by another arret was increased to 100 millions; the farm of tobacco, amounting to 4 millions a year, was then granted to the company as a fund to pay the interest, and, under the direction of Mr. Law, they made greater profits from it. Stocks were thus enhanced from 70 per cent. below to 20 per cent. above par. The India and African companies were afterwards incorporated with the Mississippi, whose capital was further extended, by which means stocks rose to 5 or 600, and, in the progress of this matter, to 1000 per cent. at this period a subscription was opened for 50 millions of livres, at 10 for 1, payable at ten different payments; and so infatuated was the nation, that the subscription in a few days amounted to 75 millions, being half as much more as was wanted, and the day after the subscription closed, those who had given 1000 sold for 2000 per cent. When the bubble burst, as it is expressed, no attempt was made by government to interfere in the transfers made by individuals, but all such transfers were valid.

From all which, I think it will appear that stocks are, in their nature, a species of property subject to great variations from calamities and other causes; that the market price will be regulated by public opinion, and that it is always considered as an equivalent. A transfer of property in the funds, at market price, differs widely from the gambling of stockjobbers, a pernicious species of traffick, of the nature of wagers or bets; and those concerned therein have no property in the funds, and generally are subject to punishment.

Should enquiry be made, what calamity have we been under to reduce so low the price of our stocks? I answer, the calamity of a defective national government; the effects of which were severely felt. In 1780, Congress called on the states to sink their respective proportions of the old paper money; part complied, and part did not. The consequence was, that in 1781 the bubble burst, and almost ruined the public credit. Early in 1783, the army, from want of pay, were nearly mutinying, and part of them soon after did mutiny, and drove Congress from Philadelphia. Again—Congress, by the confederation, were authorised to tax the states on a valuation of their respective property; but the states were unable to produce the documents required for forming that valuation, and refused to adopt a new rule proposed by Congress, who could therefore levy no tax. To evince an honest disposition, and to support public credit as far as possible, Congress proposed the plan of impost, and supplementary funds: this was accepted by some states, and violently opposed in others, which produced apprehension that a considerable part of the union wished to apply the spunge to the public debt. These circumstances, and the consequent commotions, so weakened government, that we had no credit, public or private, at home or abroad. By these and other calamities, and the load of our debt, were the stocks reduced, the public opinion fixed their rates, and taking the risk, they were worth no more; but circumstances are now altered, and they are increased in value.

Gentlemen, to support discrimination, have charged assignees with fraud. Are the assignees chargeable for the defects of the confederation? Or for a non-compliance of some of the states with the requisitions for sinking the old bills of credit? Or for the mutinying of part of the army? Or for defeating the plan of the impost and supplementary funds? Or for the consequent commotions? Or did the assignees deceive the original holders? Did they act the part of sharpers and swindlers? If so, bring the culprits to justice; your country demands it. But if their only crime is good fortune in their negociations, if they have purchased the securities in open market, and honestly paid for them, treat them as good citizens, acquit them of fraud, and do them justice. Being among those original holders who have transfered part of their certificates, and not replaced them, I can feel for myself as well as for our brave soldiers, but am against discrimination. So much for the justice of the measure: Let us now consider the policy of it.

It is admitted on all sides that the preservation of public faith is indispensable to the welfare of the Union, and in what does it consist? Public faith, as I conceive, consists in a punctual fulfilment of engagements and contracts on the part of government. To preserve public faith, therefore, it is necessary that a nation should have adequate resources, the government adequate powers, and those who administer it, integrity and abilities. That our resources are equal to the payment of our debts has not been denied, that Congress have not sufficient power, I presume none will assert.

The preservation, then, of public faith, will principally depend on their integrity and abilities. Their abilities may not be questioned; but their conduct in this case will be critically examined and tried by the standard of morality: If it will stand the test, they will have the confidence of the people; but if not, vain will be every attempt to establish public credit. For this is nothing but the confidence of the people in public faith, and the people will think that, whatever resources they may have, or power to change the form of government, the defective principles of their rulers can only be corrected by the Sovereign of the Universe. Is it good policy, then, to rest the public faith on an act of discrimination, which is intended to saddle one class of citizens with a tax to repair the loss which another class has sustained by a breach of contract on the part of the public? This will wear the appearance of committing one fraud to cure another. The right of speculators to purchase certificates, at the market price, is undoubted, and their conduct in making the purchases and payments is unexceptionable; but if there was a doubt of this, in regard to some, would it be sufficient ground for a discrimination?

Again, the whole expence of the war is supposed to be about one hundred 76 millions dollars, of which there is now due about 80000000 dollars, exclusive of 2000000 supposed to be due to the third class of soldiers. Is it good policy by funding the debt to do every thing necessary for the support of public credit, except making payment of 2000000 dollars, and then, at the risk of public credit, by an act of discrimination, to save the sum last mentioned, which is but one eighty-eighth part of the expence of the war?

But how are we to obtain loans in future? Some gentlemen conceive the establishment of our funds will always precede the loans: Can any gentleman insure this? I conceive not. There is not a nation in Europe so happily circumstanced; and if an unfunded debt should again be requisite, who will lend when your unfunded securities cannot be transferred, because you have established a precedent for discrimination? Is it not evident, then, the proposition is pregnant with ruinous consequences?

If enquiry be made what is to be done with the suffering soldiers? I answer, Pay them, if your funds are sufficient; if not, assure them you will do it as soon as funds can be provided. It has been suggested, that they have relinquished to the public seven-eighths of their property: If they have, I think it unjust to accept it. But is this the fact? Would they not have received the whole of their liquidated demands in specie, had it been offered? There can be no reason to doubt of this. Some gentlemen say, they wish to compound the matter, between the soldiers and their assignees, because we cannot pay both: Would not a composition, on such principles, be a declaration of national bankruptcy? And shall the United States, with 3000000 inhabitants, with the most flattering prospects arising from the increase of commerce, husbandry and manufactures, with such an extensive territory, and in the vigor of their youth, declare bankruptcy for a debt, including the federal, state, and foreign loans, not exceeding 80000000 dollars, or 18000000 sterl. when Great Britain, with only 8 millions of inhabitants, can fund a debt of 240 millions sterl.? I hope not—and consenting to such a measure, would never acknowledge myself an American.

Some gentlemen have referred us to the act of Congress for scaling the continental currency, to prove both the policy and justice of a discrimination. Let us examine that matter: Congress, from the commencement of the war to Feb. 1781, were but a meeting of State Commissioners, without any form of government or powers, except such as were contained in their discordant commissions. From April 1775, to the end of 1779, they supported the war by artificial credit: At that period they had issued 200000000 of paper dollars, and borrowed 35000000 of dollars on loan office certificates, which were afterwards reduced to 11000000; they had borrowed all they could in Europe, and were reduced to the necessity of stopping emissions, and of depending on the States for monthly supplies of 15000000 of depreciated dollars, and on domestic loans. In March, 1780, the proposed taxes and loans failed; emissions on the former plan were at an end, and Congress were reduced to the necessity of scaling the old debt, to sink it, and of beginning anew, or of giving up the cause; Sad alternative! to violate the public faith or be enslaved. They chose the former, but aimed to do all possible justice. Indeed they had one reason for scaling bills of credit, which applies not to the liquidated debt. The public did not receive the value of the former, but did of the latter, according to the nominal sums; and had each emission been scaled according to its value when issued, the public would probably have been better satisfied, but having reduced the old bills from 40 to 1, did Congress attempt to rescale them when they sunk to 1000 for 1? Or did they provide that original holders, who passed continental money for less than they received it, should be reimbursed by the assignees? If not, the precedent is against discrimination. Indeed if the precedent favored such a measure, it is admitted by the gentleman who produced it to have been a violation of faith, and is therefore a bad precedent, which can never sanctify a bad act, or alter the eternal rules of justice. Because then Congress, in a distressing war, without a form of government, and at the end of their resources, violated faith, can we, on a principal of policy, in a profound peace, with a strong government, and sufficient resources, be justified in taking a measure which promises so little advantage; and which may involve such dangerous consequences? If this measure is adopted, what is to be done with them who have given Congress a dollar in public securities for an acre of land, such as you will now sell for one fifth of a dollar in the same securities. Ought not Congress, on their own principle, as the assignee of the purchaser, to reimburse four-fifths of this property? But what security, will a speculator in land have, who may purchase of an original proprietor, that when the value of the land is enhanced, a similar discrimination will not be made? And who, thus circumstanced, will purchase your lands.

With respect to the practicability of discriminating, gentlemen in favor of the measure have not removed the objections of those who are against it, and have only said provision must be made in certain cases, without explaining. It has been said, if the latter will unite with the former, the difficulties, altho great, may be removed; but no effort can make a measure practicable, which is impracticable. Such attempts tend to weaken government, and to bring the laws into contempt, as we have seen in regulating acts.

Public opinion has been mentioned as an argument in favor of the plan. I have the highest respect for the public opinion, but have not argued on this ground: First, because in the present case we know not the public opinion; and secondly because conjecture is endless and useless. Indeed, in great national concerns, the public will generally form their opinions by the proceedings of the Legislature, because the latter have a more general view of matters, and the best means for forming a judgment. If on the whole, then, the justice, policy, or practicability of the measure, was only in question, ought we to accept it. But when we are doubtful of all, ought we not to reject the proposition!

Mr. BLAND seconded Mr. GERRY'S motion. He said he was apprehensive the idea of discrimination had already worked mischief. He then explained the fallacy and injustice of such a measure, which he thought had been clearly proved to the house, and assigned among other reasons its impracticability, which, if there were ninety-nine reasons for it, that in itself was sufficient to make him vote against the amendment.

Holders will come to the treasury and demand payment; there they must deposit their certificate, and there they must lie until proofs can be obtained. The same inconvenience will arise respecting the interest: suppose a creditor, if the amendment should pass, was obliged to look for proofs, where must he seek them? in the grave, beyond the sea, in Asia! Suppose a creditor was unwilling to comply with this law, you must then pass another law to compel him to deposit his security.

The question had not been answered to his satisfaction, and he shall not have risen were it not on account of the point of discrimination, to which he had always entertained an aversion, as involving the loss of that most valuable and inestimable jewel PUBLIC CREDIT.

If we commit this breach of public faith, it would be little better than the tender laws of Rhode-Island. No doubt some of the speculators had deserved punishment, but others are innocent. Mr. Bland observed that he was no speculator, but he held original securities, therefore the decision could not affect him. There is hardly a state in the union that wishes for any discrimination. If the state accounts are to be all reckoned, what a day of reckoning would that be, to travel back and issue fresh notes; it would be two final settlements. In short, there appeared so much intricacy and difficulty, that it was utterly impossible and impracticable in his opinion; he therefore was against Mr. Madison's amendment, but would second that of Mr. Gerry.

[*Some explanations with respect to order then took place, and Mr. Gerry agreed to withdraw his motion until the proposition of Mr. Madison should be first disposed of.*]

Mr. BURKE rose and observed, that on Friday last he had laid before the committee a motion for making a discrimination between original holders and assignees of public securities, and for establishing a scale of depreciation of those securities; this motion he afterwards thought proper to withdraw, as, on further consideration, he deemed it altogether impracticable, and because he was not convinced that such a measure was honest and consistent with public faith. He did not think himself at liberty to give it his support.

As to the question before the committee, Mr. Burke said he could consider it in no other view than as a question, Whether we shall commit a

breach of public faith with the domeſtic creditors of the United States, and violate thoſe ſolemn promiſes, ſo often repeated in appeals and proclamations to the people by the late government, and a promiſe or engagement which has been reiterated by the new conſtitution? In his opinion it required no profound ſkill, in politics or finance, to anſwer the queſtion: it is only conſulting the dictates of common faith and common honeſty, which command nations as well as individuals to fulfil their engagements.

The United States have repeatedly pledged themſelves, in terms plain as language can expreſs, to pay to the bearer a ſpecific ſum: and to commit a violation of this promiſe appeared to him both unjuſt and impolitic. If the United States are able to perform it, they ought to do ſo. He believed and hoped that they had the ability; and even in the caſe of inability, he was of opinion, ſhould bankrutptcy itſelf enſue from the honorable attempt to do juſtice, this would be preferable to a ſtain caſt upon theſe ſtates, at the commencement of their political career, by a cool and deliberate act of public injuſtice to their creditors. America has eſtabliſhed in the world a high military character: let her but perform her engagements, and ſhe will alſo eſtabliſh a national character of honor and fair dealing. This will be to her as a real and ſubſtantial treaſure, which ſhe will be able to tranſmit, like a fair inheritance, to her children. Should we, on the other hand, pollute her, by ſuffering her to commit a breach of honor, it will be ſuch a public calamity as no money can compenſate.

Mr. Burke then offered a few obſervations, in anſwer to thoſe gentlemen who were ſo urgent in favor of the motion. They had advanced that the officers and ſoldiers have not been fully paid. The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Madiſon] has ſaid that, without the diſcrimination which he offers, we ſhall be raiſing monuments of gratitude, not to our officers and ſoldiers who fought for us, but to thoſe who ſpeculated on their ſecurities. On this, Mr. Burke remarked, that it is to be lamented, when our army was diſbanded, the derangement of our affairs put it out of our power to pay them in ſpecie. The ſtates, however, did every thing in their power to provide for their ſoldiers. The ſtate of S. Carolina gave them bounties in lands, and the warrants, and grants for theſe lands were paſſed through different offices without the uſual fees. North-Carolina, Virginia, and other ſtates, gave ſimilar bounties, he believed, without mentioning the lands appropriated for them by the United States. He would not ſay that the ſoldiers have been rewarded, for what reward can be adequate to their great ſervices? But he inſiſted that the people of America have not been unmindful of thoſe ſervices. If we, for a moment, conſider the conduct of the people towards one part of the army (the officers) we ſhall find that America has ſignally diſplayed her gratitude towards them, from the commander in chief down to the enſign. The illuſtrous leader of her armies retiring from the field to private life, ſhe again raiſed to the elevated ſtation of a *ſovereign prince!* Through what motives? From gratitude for his ſplendid ſervices. View the high departments of the general government; look into the ſeveral offices; enter the ſeveral cuſtom houſes from the northern to the ſouthern extremity of the continent: there we ſhall find conſpicuous inſtances of gratitude.

Let us now ſee how the people regard the officers of the army in the different ſtates. In S. Carolina, no other claſs of citizens ſtand any chance in competition with officers; they are promoted to the ſtations of governor, lieutenant-governor, privy counſellors; they are to be found preſiding in the tribunals of juſtice, in the legiſlatures, and on the floor of Congreſs; and the gratitude of the people follows them in the private walks and ordinary occupations of life. They are juſtly held in love and veneration; and if the future hiſtorian of America records the truth and nothing but the truth, he muſt raiſe laſting monuments, both of the illuſtrious ſervices of the officers of the army, and of the gratitude and love of the people for thoſe ſervices. This, Mr. Burke ſaid, he mentioned in anſwer, or rather defence of the people, and to clear them from the charge of ingratitude.

It is urged, in favor of diſcrimination, that a few ſpeculators will make princely fortunes. This, he ſaid, was a circumſtance which he ſincerely regretted; as he did likewiſe regret the ſpeculations now carrying on, from this city and other places, in the ſtate of South-Carolina—the ſending pilot-boats ſecretly from New York to Charleſton, while the people there were aſleep, as it were, and totally unacquainted with the councils or views of adminiſtration, with information on the one ſide only: this he thought a hard caſe. But the ſpeculators availing themſelves of this and a variety of other advantages, could not, he ſaid, juſtify him in his own mind, in giving a vote that would give a ſtab to the good faith and credit of a nation in whoſe councils he had the honor of a ſuffrage.

He foreſaw, however, a ſtill greater misfortune, in this buſineſs, than that of a few ſpeculators aggrandizing themſelves by our funding ſyſtem: it is, *that our public ſecurities will go into the hands of foreigners.* The preſent ſyſtem, offered by the Secretary, is *actually mortgaging theſe ſtates* to foreign ſpeculators, for the amount of the debt: for the holders will ſell, as they have already ſold, immenſe ſums to foreigners, to raiſe ready money. Few of our citizens poſſeſſing monied capitals, ready money will yield far greater emoluments, employed in commerce or agriculture, than when lodged in the funds. This is a calamity which he lamented from his ſoul: but, upon a moſt ſerious conſideration upon the ſubject, he was not clear but a forfeiture of public faith, a loſs of public credit, would be for America a far greater calamity. He entertained ſtrong apprehenſions, that parting with the fair inheritance of public faith and public honor, under any pretext, would be acting the part of him who ſold his inheritance for a meſs of pottage. Viewing the ſubject in this light, he ſaid he could not, he dared not vote in favor of the motion.

He alſo mentioned another ground whereon he oppoſed it: the ſcheme of a diſcrimination appeared totally impracticable. Commiſſioners muſt be appointed, not only in different ſtates, but in different places of the ſame ſtate. If commiſſioners are appointed, for inſtance, in Charleſton, the citizens muſt attend from the remoteſt part of the ſtate, and be worried in travelling backwards and forwards to ſeek for witneſſes, many of whom may be dead or removed into other countries—not to mention the length of time and enormous expence which ſo complicated a buſineſs muſt occaſion.

Mr. Burke concluded by declaring it to be his opinion, that the propoſition, if agreed to, would throw things into confuſion and perplexity, which he could not ſee the extent of: he ſhould therefore oppoſe it.

TUESDAY, FEB. 23.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treaſury—the following reſolution under debate, viz.—"Reſolved that permanent funds ought to be appropriated for the payment of intereſt on, and the gradual diſcharge of the domeſtic debt of the United States."

Mr. Livermore—This propoſition is of a very extenſive nature—of which the committee have at preſent no adequate idea—I do not learn that the creditors have applied to Congreſs to pay them; we do not know what the States are doing in the buſineſs; we have an arduous taſk to provide for the debt of the union—The State debts are unaſcertained, we do not know their merits or amount—there are commiſſioners appointed to ſettle accounts between the United States and individual States; we ought therefore to ſuſpend all proceedings on the ſubject, for the preſent—and if it cannot be paſſed over, I hope the reſolution will be rejected.

Mr. Lawrance in favor of the motion, obſerved that the aſſumption of the State debts, may be conſidered as a meaſure favorable to the States as the revenue collected through one medium will be more productive, and leſs liable to oppreſs the people than when collected through various and oppoſing channels—He adverted to the neceſſity of a uniformity in the exciſe; the States are repealing their exciſe laws—and the making proviſion for theſe debts muſt devolve upon the union; he replied to Mr. Livermore's objection from the amounts not being known, by ſaying that the Secretary has aſcertained this amount with ſuch preciſion that there is no probability of its being more than 25 millions dollars—it is likely to fall below that ſum—the exact amount may be known in ſeaſon—but from the returns actually received it is pretty evident that the eſtimate of thoſe States not received, is rated full high—he entered into a conſideration of the preſent ſtate of thoſe debts, the merit of the creditors, the neceſſity of a ſettlement of the debts of the reſpective States—and the improbability of this being done while matters remain in their preſent ſituation. He advocated the meaſure from motives of policy and juſtice, and as holding out the only proſpect left to the State creditors; their acquieſcence in the meaſure is to be expected, and the plan is calculated upon that idea; he hoped therefore that the committee would adopt the reſolution, as at preſent he ſaw no objection of any weight to taking it up at this time—he ſhould however hear with pleaſure the obſervations of gentlemen upon the ſubject.

Mr. Ames wiſhed that the harmony which has prevailed, may be preſerved—he preſumed for a variety of reaſons that the conſideration of the aſſumption of the State debts would not be poſtponed—for if it ſhould, it would alter the whole face of the ſubject before the committee, and the report of the Secretary would be no longer before us, but we ſhould be wondering from idea to idea without having any definite object. Except the State debts ſhould be aſſumed, the revenue contemplated by the Secretary cannot be juſtly aſſumed, as it has ſpecial reference to this object.

Mr. Sherman was in favor of the aſſumption, after a proper diſcrimination was made between debts incurred for the general defence, and thoſe which had reſpect to the particular intereſt of particular States, and in which the union was not intereſted; he thought the committee might now adopt the general reſolution, as proviſion, according to the Secretary's plan, is to be a future buſineſs.

Mr. Stone contended that the general government would acquire an undue influence, and the State governments would be annihilated by the meaſure—he objected to the mode of raiſing revenue by impoſt as operating very unjuſtly and unequally: he then adverted particularly to the ſubject of aſſumption, and ſaid, that he very much doubted the right of the United States to adopt the debts of the individual States—he went on the ſuppoſition that theſe debts were not incurred on the account of the United States; and if the United States ſhould proceed upon this principle there is no calculating the extent of taxation.—The debts of the ſeveral States are exceedingly various as to their merits and relative value—the paper of the ſeveral States is very variouſly and oppoſitely eſtimated.—He then pointed out the difficulties which would reſult from the meaſure from the different plans of policy adopted by the States, and the creditors themſelves, by which the laws of Congreſs would not have a uniform operation—It would produce this evil, the States would be taxed by their own legiſlatures as high as they could go for the purſes of internal legiſlation—and at the ſame time, the general government would be extending taxation as far as *they* can carry it for the exigencies of the union. He obſerved the committee had gone on with a celerity of which he had not conceived—the buſineſs he had ſuppoſed would have taken up a longer time for diſcuſſion—the deciſions of the committee are of the higheſt importance; I do not ſee the neceſſity of precipitating the preſent queſtion.—If we move with caution in this great buſineſs we may give full ſatisfaction, and may receive the hearty concurrence of our conſtituents—but if we haſtily adopt meaſures, which may be contrary to their feelings, we ſhall meet with oppoſition and difficulty in carrying our meaſures into effect.

Mr. Sherman replied particularly to Mr. Stone. He ſaid that both the general and ſtate governments were founded on the people—and there could be no danger in ſtrengthening both governments, and veſting them with full powers to the limits of their Conſtitutions. The ſeveral States are free, ſovereign, and independent, as to all the purpoſes of their domeſtic regulation—and there can be no doubt that the people will be pleaſed with every meaſure adopted by Congreſs, agreeable to the Conſtitution, from which they derive advantages. If they exceed the line of the conſtitution, the people will chuſe others which ſhall propoſe ſuch alterations as may be found neceſſary.

He could ſee no difficulty from claſhing juriſdictions in the meaſure; on the other hand, he conceived it the moſt effectual way to prevent it. He doubted not that the ſtate creditors would ſee their intereſt in acceding to the meaſure; he was oppoſed to a poſtponement; the plan is not to be immediately adopted, and as there will be ſufficient time allowed for every arrangement, he hoped the committee would now decide the queſtion.

Mr. Burke entered into a conſideration of the riſe and progreſs of the debt of South-Carolina, and from a ſeries of particulars endeavored to ſhew that their debt was incurred on account of the general defence, and he thought it ought to be ſo conſidered, but ſtill he had his doubts reſpecting the propriety of aſſuming thoſe debts the preſent ſeſſion—he thought it abſurd to engage to pay debts when we do not know their amount, nor the abilities of the United States.

Mr. Gerry adverted to the conſtitution, to aſcertain whether the aſſumption was compatible therewith; and found that it was perfectly conſiſtent, as the debts were incurred for the general defence. The ſtates were as agents on the part of the continent. The ſtates and the general government are as one great machine, in which ſmall wheels are as neceſſary as large, demoliſh one, and you deſtroy the whole. If the ſtate debts ſhould not be aſſumed, a clamor will be raiſed againſt the ſtate governments for not doing juſtice, and the people will conſider them as oppreſſive; they will diminiſh in the eſtimation of the particular citizens. If the general government ſhould hereafter oppreſs the ſtates, they will be in a better ſituation to defend themſelves, being out of debt, than if in debt; for out of debt, out of danger. He expatiated on the policy of the meaſure, and the fruitful ſource of diſunion and diſcord, which would reſult from oppoſing and claſhing ſyſtems of revenue and exciſe. He was in favor of a full compliance with the contract to the State creditor; their claims are equally well founded with thoſe of the creditors of the union—the object was the ſame—the ſervices the ſame, and juſtice plead as urgently for them, as for the other.

Mr. Goodhue, Mr. Fitzſimons, and Mr. Smith, ſpoke in favor of the propoſition.

Mr. Lawrance, moved that the committee ſhould riſe and report progreſs.

(To be continued.)

CONGRESS.

HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, MARCH 8, 1790.

MR. VINING took his ſeat this day.—The bill to promote the progreſs of the uſeful arts, was brought in engroſſed, read the third time, and ordered to lie on the table till to morrow.

The bill to accept of the ceſſion of lands in the weſtern territory, by the ſtate of North Carolina was read the ſecond time and refered to a committee of the whole houſe.

The reſolve of the Senate for giving further inſtructions to the collectors of the revenue was read the ſecond time.

This reſolution enjoins a compliance with the ſtate inſpection laws previous to clearing out veſſels, and was refered to a committee conſiſting of Mr. White, Mr. Tucker, and Mr. Contee—who are inſtructed to bring in a bill purſuant thereto.

A bill to provide for an addition to the ſalaries of the clerks in the office of the commiſſioners of accounts, was read the firſt time.

Mr. Livermore preſented a bill, making appropriations for the ſervices of the year 1790.—Read the firſt time.

A report of the ſecretary of the treaſury, on ſundry petitions, was read.

A meſſage was received from the Preſident of the United States, by his ſecretary; with a copy of the ratification of the amendments propoſed by Congreſs, to the conſtitution of the United States, by the ſtate of Delaware.

A petition of Gifford Dally, was read, and referred to the committee of appropriations.

Mr. White preſented a bill to regulate the exportation of certain articles, ſubject to inſpection, by the laws of the ſeveral ſtates.

Mr. Ames preſented the memorial of David Olyphant, Director-General of the Hoſpitals, in the ſouthern department of the late continental army.

Mr. Hartley moved that the report of the committee on the memorials of the people called Quakers, ſhould be taken up for a ſecond reading, which motion being adopted, it was read as follows—viz.

That from the nature of the matters contained in thoſe memorials, they were induced to examine the powers veſted in Congreſs, under the preſent conſtitution, relating to the abolition of ſlavery, and are clearly of opinion: Firſt, that the general government is expreſsly reſtrained from prohibiting the importation of ſuch perſons as any of the ſtates now exiſting ſhall think proper to admit until the year 1808.

Secondly, That Congreſs, by a fair conſtruction of the conſtitution, are equally reſtrained from interfering in the emancipation of ſlaves, who already are, or who may, within the period mentioned, be imported into, or born within any of the ſaid ſtates.

Thirdly, That Congreſs have no authority to interfere in the internal regulations of particular ſtates, relative to the inſtruction of ſlaves in the principles of morality and religion, to their comfortable cloathing, accommodation and ſubſiſtence; to the regulation of their marriages, and the prevention of the violation of the rights thereof, or to the ſeparation of children from their parents; to a comfortable proviſion in caſes of ſickneſs, age or infirmity, or to the ſeizure, tranſportation, or ſale of free negroes, but have the fulleſt confidence in the wiſdom and humanity of the legiſlatures of the ſeveral ſtates, that they will reviſe their laws, from time to time, when neceſſary, and promote the objects mentioned in the memorials, and every other meaſure that may tend to the happineſs of ſlaves.

Fourthly, that nevertheleſs, Congreſs, have authority, if they ſhall think it neceſſary to lay at any time, a tax or duty, not exceeding ten dollars for each perſon, of any deſcription, the importation of whom ſhall be by any of the ſtates, admitted as aforeſaid.

Fifthly, That Congreſs have authority to interdict, or (ſo far as it is, or may be carried on by citizens of the United States, for ſupplying foreigners) to regulate the African trade, and to make proviſion for the humane treatment of ſlaves, in all caſes while on their paſſages to the United States, or to foreign ports, as far as it reſpects the citizens of the United States.

Sixthly, That Congreſs have alſo authority to prohibit foreigners from fitting out veſſels in any port of the United States for tranſporting perſons from Africa to any foreign port.

Seventhly, That the memorialiſts be informed, that in all caſes, to which the authority of Congreſs extends, they will exerciſe it for the humane objects of the memorialiſts, ſo far as they can be promoted on the principles of juſtice, humanity and good policy.

Mr. Smith (S.C.) moved that the above be referred to a committee of the whole, to be taken up the firſt Monday in May next.

Mr. Boudinot propoſed the firſt Monday in April.

Mr. Jackſon oppoſed the latter period; he urged ſeveral reaſons which rendered it extremely inconvenient to aſſign ſo early a day: A proper knowledge of the preſent ſtate of the importations, and other particulars reſpecting the ſlave-trade, which cannot be known ſo early, call for a longer time—he adverted to the peculiar circumſtances of the ſouthern ſtates, and urged the neceſſity and juſtice of requiring a more perfect knowledge of the ſentiments of their conſtituents; to adopt it in its preſent form, would produce infinite miſchiefs in the ſouthern ſtates—it would excite tumults, ſeditions, and inſurrections.

Mr. Vining oppoſed a poſtponement—he conſidered the report if adopted as an honorable declaration of the ſentiments of the legiſlature, on this important buſineſs; he could not conceive that there was any grounds for the alarming apprehenſions entertained by ſome gentlemen.

Mr. Boudinot anſwered Mr. Jackſon—he obſerved that if the report was calculated to produce ſuch effects, the argument is in favor of the ſhorteſt period; that the report may be ſo amended, as to prevent thoſe effects.—He moved the firſt Monday in April, becauſe, he expected that Congreſs would riſe in May, and he thought it would not be giving the buſineſs that attention which it deſerved, to poſtpone it to a period which may preclude all diſcuſſion of the ſubject whatever.

Mr. Smith (S. C.) and Mr. Stone urged the poſtponement, the latter Gentleman obſerved, that he had not approved of the interference of Congreſs in the buſineſs. He thought that perſons who are not intereſted, ought not to interfere; ſuch interferences favored very ſtrongly of an intolerant ſpirit; and he could not ſuppoſe that any one of the ſtates had a right to interfere in the internal regulations of another: The ſtates are not accountable to each other for their moral conduct. He wiſhed that the intereſting circumſtances of the ſtates, which would be ſo materially affected, might be taken into conſideration, and the ſubject poſtponed to the firſt Monday in May.

Mr. Vining replied to Mr. Stone, and obſerved, that it was very extraordinary, that a humane liberal ſpirit—a wiſh to diffuſe univerſal liberty ſhould be called an intolerant ſpirit; and diſintereſted perſons, he had always ſuppoſed the moſt likely to form a juſt judgment; he could not but approve of the report of the committee, it was couched in terms of humanity and prudence, and did great honor to the gentlemen who framed it.

Mr. Boudinot obſerved that as there were ſome expreſſions in the report which if altered, might give ſatisfaction to all parties, he would move that the houſe ſhould now go into a commit ee of the whole, in order to make thoſe alterations.

Mr. Jackſon ſaid for the purpoſe of altering the phraſeology, he ſhould have no objection to going into a committee.

Mr. Burke was for poſtponing the buſineſs altogether, he dilated on the pernicious conſequences which may be expected to flow from an interference in the buſineſs.

Mr. Smith (S. C.) moved that the report ſhould be recommitted—he expatiated on the conſtruction which might be put on the ſeveral parts of the report and ſhewed their pernicious tendency; he was pointedly ſevere in animadverting on the conduct of the memorialiſts in medling with the buſineſs.

Mr. Sherman oppoſed this motion; he ſaid that this report was agreeable to his ideas, it was prudent, humane and judicious.

The motion for recommitment was negatived—It was then voted that it ſhould be referred to a committee of the whole houſe—the time when it ſhould be taken up, occaſioned ſome further debate; it was urged that as ſo much time had been ſpent in the diſcuſſion and many ideas were thrown out of alarming inſurrections, it was become neceſſary to make an early deciſion on the buſineſs; Mr. Boudinot therefore withdrew his motion for April, and moved that the Houſe ſhould at this time go into a committee of the whole on the report.

Mr. Jackſon was oppoſed to the motion; he animadverted with great ſeverity on the memorialiſts, and introduced an account of the miſchiefs wich had reſulted from the interference of a ſect called Anabaptiſts in the State of Georgia.

Mr. Gerry juſtified the Quakers—he was aſtoniſhed he ſaid, that theſe perſons ſhould be treated with ſo much ſeverity, when it was well known that they had exerted themſelves in the ſame cauſe in Great-Britain and other parts of the world—that they had formed ſocieties to effect their humane purpoſes, and for their exertions, had hitherto met with univerſal applauſe.

It was finally voted to take up the report tomorrow week.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treaſury—the aſſumption of the State debts under conſideration.—Mr. White, Mr. Stone, Mr. Smith (S. C.) and Mr. Gerry, ſpoke on the ſubject; but the committee roſe without coming to a deciſion———Mr. Clymer had leave of abſence for a few days.

TUESDAY, MARCH 9.

Mr. Benſon preſented a memorial from William Bedlow, late deputy Poſt-Maſter of the city of New-York—which was read.

The bill for encreaſing the ſalaries of the ſubordinate Clerks, in the office of the commiſſioners on accounts, to the ſum which is allowed to ſuch Clerks in the Treaſury department; was read the ſecond time and ordered to be engroſſed.

The bill for making appropriations for the ſervices of the year 1790—was read the ſecond time, and ordered to be referred to a committee of the whole on Thurſday next.

The bill to prevent the exportation of goods not duly inſpected according to the laws of the reſpective States, was read a ſecond time and referred to the committee of the whole on Thurſday next.

The report of the committee appointed purſuant to the memorial of Robert Morris, Eſq. was read, with certain papers accompanying the ſame.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treaſury—the propoſition for the aſſumption of the State debts under conſideration.

After further debate on this propoſition, it was adopted, 31 to 26—as in the following words:

Reſolved that the debts of the reſpective States ought, with the conſent of the creditors, to be aſſumed and provided for by the United States; and at the ſame time that effectual proviſion be made for the liquidation of, and crediting to the States the whole of their expences during the war, as the ſame have been, or may be ſtated for the purpoſe—and that the beſt evidence of the ſame be taken, the nature of the caſe will admit.

The next propoſition was alſo agred to, viz.

Reſolved that it is adviſeable to endeavor to effect a new modification of the domeſtic debt, including that of the particular States, with the voluntary conſent of the creditors by a loan, upon terms mutually beneficial to them and to the United States.

Reſolved, That for the purpoſe expreſſed in the laſt preceding reſolution, ſubſcriptions toward a loan ought to be opened, to the amount of the ſaid domeſtic debt; including that of the reſpective States, upon the terms following,—this reſolve was adopted; the firſt alternative which follows being read—a conſiderable debate enſued, occaſioned principally by a motion of Mr. Boudinot to ſtrike out all that relates to the weſtern territory—the committee finally roſe without deciding on the motion or the rate of intereſt. Adjourned.

NEW-YORK, MARCH 10.

A Correſpondent obſerves, it is ſo long ſince the agricultural intereſt of this country enjoyed the advantage of a conſiderable temporary riſe in the prices of grain, that it is not a little ſurpriſing to find perſons coming forward with their propoſals of an embargo. To ſay nothing of the extreme modeſty in which this propoſition has obtruded itſelf on the public—provided we are favored with a very great ſurpluſage of grain, as is to be preſumed—the project of laying an embargo on its exportation would be as wiſe, as the conduct of a merchant, who ſhould ſhut up his warehouſe at the moment of a briſk demand for his commodities.

The Legiſlature of the Commonwealth of Maſſachuſetts, has appointed the Honorable NATHAN DANE, their Agent, to ſupport the claims of that Commonwealth againſt the United States.

A Correſpondent would ſuggeſt the propriety of Government's offering bounties for the encouragement of Agriculture the enſuing ſeaſon, more particularly to thoſe farmers, who ſhall raiſe the greateſt quantities of ſummer grain of all ſorts—and of ſuch vegetables as are the neareſt ſubſtitutes for grain.

The plan of rendering Federal Officers ineligible to State appointments is hoſtile to the beſt intereſts of the States—as it will very frequently deprive the people of the abilities of their beſt men—excite jealouſies, and an oppoſition of intereſts:—Juſtice to the people requires, that good men ſhould in all caſes be competent to different appointments, that are not in their natures incompatible.

"PHILELUTHEROS"—"AMERICANUS," &c. are received, and will appear on Saturday next.

To be SOLD,

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THAT pleaſant and valuable Place formerly called COLES-FERRY, now by the name of VAN DUZER'S, on Staten Iſland, Richmond County, with two good ſufficient Pettiaugers for the ferrying buſineſs. It is a beautiful ſituation, and one of the beſt ſtands for a Ferry, or Tavern, on Staten-Iſland, and an excellent Shad and Herring Fiſhery within 20 yards of the door, Black-Fiſh, and all other kind of Fiſh in their ſeaſon. It is likewiſe the beſt and moſt convenient Ferry to Long-Iſland, where a number of paſſengers paſs and repaſs. It lies within two miles of the Point of the Narrows, and between 8 and 9 miles from New-York. There is about 30 acres of excellent good Land, chiefly Meadow, with a very good Wharf, Houſe, Barn and Garden—the whole being in good repair. It will alſo make a beautiful Country Seat, fit for any gentleman.

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Staten-Iſland, March 6, 1790.